

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Please add new claims 36-57 and rewrite the pending claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A method for renewing a prescription for a pharmaceutical via an electronic network, comprising the steps of:
 - computer monitoring of an expiration date of a prescription by periodically determining whether a predetermined time period before said expiration date has been reached;
 - computer generating a prescription renewal request for [[the]] renewal of said prescription prior to said expiration date based on said computer monitoring, where said generating occurs without human intervention;
 - transmitting said prescription renewal request via said electronic network to a handheld computing device associated with [[to]] a prescriber having authority to authorize a dispenser to dispense said prescription,
 - receiving a renewal prescription, in response to said prescription renewal request, from said prescriber; and
 - notifying, via said electronic network, [[a]] said dispenser to fill said renewal prescription, wherein said dispenser comprises a pharmacy or a pharmacy benefit management organization.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said generating step further comprises creating said prescription renewal request from the following: a patient identifier, a pharmaceutical identifier, a dispenser identifier, a prescription identifier, a prescriber identifier, a dosage, number of refills, and a strength.
4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said method further comprises the step, prior to said receiving step, of providing information useful to said prescriber for reviewing said prescription renewal request.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 4, wherein said information is selected from the following: warnings for any drug-drug reactions, formulary listings, patient medication history, and low cost therapeutic alternatives.
6. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said receiving step further comprises the step of acquiring ~~[[a]]~~ said renewal prescription, wherein said renewal prescription has components that have been changed from said prior prescription.
7. (Original) The method according to claim 6, wherein said components are selected from the following: a patient identifier, a pharmaceutical identifier, a dispenser identifier, a prescription identifier, a prescriber identifier, a dosage, number of refills, and a strength.
8. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said receiving step further comprises the step of acquiring an appeal from said prescriber for a patient of said prior prescription to contact said prescriber.
9. (Original) The method according to claim 8, wherein said acquiring step further comprises: notifying said dispenser to inform said patient to contact said prescriber.
10. (Original) The method according to claim 8, wherein said acquiring step further comprises notifying said patient to contact said prescriber.
11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said computer monitoring, generating, transmitting, receiving, and notifying steps occur for a plurality of prescription renewal requests and renewal prescriptions.
12. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said method further comprises the steps of ascertaining a status of said prescription renewal request.
13. (Original) The method according to claim 12, wherein said ascertaining step comprises:
determining how many prescription renewal requests were transmitted to said prescriber; and
establishing how many prescription renewal requests said prescriber has addressed.
14. (Original) The method according to claim 12, wherein said ascertaining step further comprises the step of sending said status to said prescriber.
15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of deleting said prescription renewal request after a set time.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of deleting said renewal prescription after a set time.
17. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps, prior to said receiving step, of:
- accepting said prescription renewal request from a renewal server, using a portable computing device;
 - displaying said prescription renewal request, via said portable computing device, to said prescriber;
 - showing said prescriber information, via said portable computing device, useful for reviewing said prescription renewal request; and
 - communicating said renewal request to said renewal server using said portable computing device.
18. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the initial steps of:
- receiving said [prior] prescription;
 - determining whether ~~a prescribed~~ said pharmaceutical from said [prior] prescription is on formulary;
 - dispensing said [prescribed] pharmaceutical based on said determining step.
19. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 18, further comprising the steps, prior to said dispensing step, of:
- ascertaining whether said [prescribed] pharmaceutical is a chronic medication; and
 - storing a result of said ascertaining step for later transmission to said prescriber.
20. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the initial step of determining whether refills are available for said [prior] prescription.
21. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said method further comprises the initial steps of:
- obtaining a patient record, said record containing at least a patient identifier, a pharmaceutical identifier for a currently prescribed pharmaceutical, a number of authorized refills of the currently prescribed pharmaceutical, and a date of the last filling of the currently prescribed pharmaceutical; and

setting a renewal date before a last refill has been consumed by a patient if said number of authorized refills is greater or equal to a predetermined number.

22. (Currently amended) A method for renewing a prescription for a pharmaceutical via an electronic network, comprising the steps of:

computer monitoring of an expiration date of a prescription by periodically determining whether a predetermined time period before said expiration date has been reached;

downloading a prescription renewal request for [[the]] renewal of said prescription from a renewal server to a handheld computing device associated with a prescriber having authority to authorize a dispenser to dispense said prescription prior to said expiration date based on said computer monitoring, where said downloading occurs without human intervention, wherein said dispenser comprises a pharmacy or a pharmacy benefit management organization;

displaying said prescription renewal request at said handheld computing device associated with said [to a] prescriber;

showing, at said handheld computing device associated with said prescriber, information useful for reviewing said prescription renewal request;

generating a renewal request; and

communicating said renewal request to said renewal server via said electronic network.

23. (Original) The method according to claim 22, wherein said showing step further comprises the step of presenting said prescriber with information selected from the following: warnings for any drug-drug reactions, formulary listings, patient medication history, and low cost therapeutic alternatives.

24. (Currently amended) A computer readable memory storing executable instructions for execution by a computer system such that said computer system functions in a specified manner, said instructions comprising:

instructions for computer monitoring of an expiration date of a prescription by periodically determining whether a predetermined time period before said expiration date has been reached;

computer instructions for generating a prescription renewal request for [[the]] renewal of said prescription before said expiration date base on said computer monitoring, where said generating occurs without human intervention;

instructions for transmitting said prescription renewal request via an electronic network in communication with said computer system to a prescriber having authority to authorize a dispenser to dispense said prescription;

instructions for receiving a renewal prescription, in response to said prescription renewal request, from said prescriber; and

instructions for notifying, via said electronic network, [[a]] said dispenser to fill said renewal prescription, wherein said dispenser comprises a pharmacy or a pharmacy benefit management organization.

25. (Currently amended) A computer readable memory according to claim 24, further comprising:

instructions for downloading a prescription renewal request for [[the]] renewal of a prior prescription from a renewal server;

instructions for displaying said prescription renewal request to a prescriber;

instructions for showing said prescriber information useful for reviewing said prescription renewal request;

instructions for generating a renewal request; and

instructions for communicating said renewal request to said renewal server.

26. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said computer monitoring comprises:

determining when a prescribed refill will expire;

setting a renewal date prior to expiration of said prescribed refill; and

periodically determining whether said renewal date has been reached.

27. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said prescription comprises multiple prescriptions for a patient.

28. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said prescription comprises multiple prescriptions for multiple patients.

29. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said prescription comprises a prescription for multiple patients.

30. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said computer monitoring occurs without patient intervention.

31. (Currently amended) A computer implemented method for renewing a prescription for a pharmaceutical via an electronic network, wherein said method occurs substantially without human intervention, comprising:

calculating a renewal date for a prescription;

periodically determining whether said renewal date has been reached;

generating a prescription renewal request for the renewal of said prescription based upon said determining;

transmitting said prescription renewal request via said electronic network to a handheld computing device associated with a prescriber having authority to authorize a dispenser to dispense said prescription;

receiving a renewal prescription, in response to said prescription renewal request, from said prescriber; and

notifying, via said electronic network, [[a]] said dispenser to fill said renewal prescription, wherein said dispenser comprises a pharmacy or a pharmacy benefit management organization.

32. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 31, wherein said generating step further comprises creating said prescription renewal request from the following: a patient identifier, a pharmaceutical identifier, a dispenser identifier, a prescription identifier, a prescriber identifier, a dosage, number of refills, and a strength.

33. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 31, wherein said method further comprises the step, prior to said receiving step, of providing information useful to said prescriber for reviewing said prescription renewal request.

34. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 33, wherein said information is selected from the following: warnings for any drug-drug reactions, formulary listings, patient medication history, and low cost therapeutic alternatives.

35. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 31, wherein said receiving step further comprises the step of acquiring [[a]] said renewal prescription, wherein said renewal prescription has components that have been changed from said prior prescription.

36. (New) The method according to claim 31, wherein said pharmacy comprises a retail-store pharmacy, a mail-order pharmacy, an on-line pharmacy, or a pharmacy benefit management organization acting as a pharmacy.

37. (New) The computer readable memory according to claim 24, wherein said pharmacy comprises a retail-store pharmacy, a mail-order pharmacy, an on-line pharmacy, or a pharmacy benefit management organization acting as a pharmacy.
38. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein said pharmacy comprises a retail-store pharmacy, a mail-order pharmacy, an on-line pharmacy, or a pharmacy benefit management organization.
39. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein said pharmacy comprises a retail-store pharmacy, a mail-order pharmacy, an on-line pharmacy, or a pharmacy benefit management organization acting as a pharmacy.
40. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein said handheld computing device comprises a handheld computer, or a personal digital assistant.
41. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein said handheld computing device comprises a personal digital assistant.
42. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein said prescription renewal request comprises at least one object that said prescriber can select to respond to said prescription renewal request.
43. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein said renewal prescription is based at least in part upon said prescription.
44. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein said handheld computing device comprises a handheld computer, or a personal digital assistant.
45. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein said renewal prescription is based at least in part upon said prescription.
46. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein said handheld computing device comprises a personal digital assistant.
47. (New) The method according to claim 31, wherein said handheld computing device comprises a handheld computer, or a personal digital assistant.
48. (New) The method according to claim 31, wherein said handheld computing device comprises a personal digital assistant.

49. (New) The method according to claim 31, wherein said renewal prescription is based at least in part upon said prescription.
50. (New) The method according to claim 24, wherein said renewal prescription is based at least in part upon said prescription.
51. (New) The method according to claim 31, wherein said prescription renewal request comprises at least one object that said prescriber can select to respond to said prescription renewal request.
52. (New) The method according to claim 24, wherein said prescription renewal request comprises at least one object that said prescriber can select to respond to said prescription renewal request.
53. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein said prescription renewal request comprises at least one object that said prescriber can select to respond to said prescription renewal request.
54. (New) The method according to claim 53, wherein said object comprises a first button for asking a patient associated with said pharmaceutical to contact said prescriber or a button for digitally signing said prescription request.
55. (New) The method according to claim 42, wherein said object comprises a first button for asking a patient associated with said pharmaceutical to contact said prescriber or a second button for digitally signing said prescription request.
56. (New) The method according to claim 52, wherein said object comprises a first button for asking a patient associated with said pharmaceutical to contact said prescriber or a second button for digitally signing said prescription request.
57. (New) The method according to claim 51, wherein said object comprises a first button for asking a patient associated with said pharmaceutical to contact said prescriber or a second button for digitally signing said prescription request.